

NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

HON. ROBERT T. SCHILLING

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. SCHILLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Adoption Day and to celebrate the many families who graciously open their homes and their lives to the most vulnerable and often forgotten children in our communities. As the father of 10 children I understand the importance of family. I also understand the many sacrifices parents make to provide the best opportunities for their kids. This is why I deeply respect adoptive and foster parents; they so readily take on additional expenses and sacrifices to provide a safe home for a child.

I recently joined the Congressional Caucus on Foster Care which is dedicated to protecting and promoting the welfare of the more than 424,000 children who are part of the foster care system in the U.S. The Caucus provides a forum where Members can come together to discuss ways we can improve the system and help these children make a successful transition out of care and into society.

Tomorrow, National Adoption Day will be celebrated across the country. There are more than 400 events planned to highlight the need for more families to open their hearts to children in need and to show gratitude to those who have taken that step. I want to thank each and every foster parent and adoptive parent for opening your safe and loving home to a child. Thank you for taking the time to enrich the lives of those children who need it the most.

ON THE OCCASION OF MARY LOUISE PETERS-HUGHES' 100th BIRTHDAY

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today for the most special purpose and privilege of honoring the life of Mary Louise Peters-Hughes on the occasion of her 100th birthday.

Mary Louise Peters-Hughes is a most remarkable woman, having lived through 100 years of the most changeable times in human history; she is also my aunt, big sister to my late father Herb, and the matriarch of our family.

Born on September 20, 1911, Mary came of age amidst the burgeoning era of women's rights. Her achievements embodied the kind of progress and leadership envisioned by that movement; throughout her life, Mary has held herself to a high standard of achievement and leadership.

In 1929, she graduated valedictorian from Rochester High School, after serving in the National Honor Society and as president of her senior class. Mary matriculated at Alma College, during a time when only 10% of young people sought higher education. Mary studied English and Latin and continued to be

a leader among her peers by serving as President of the Wright Ladies Hall and member of the Philamathion Ladies Social Society. Within four years, she graduated with a near-perfect grade point average. Finally, before embarking upon a career in teaching, Aunt Mary obtained her Master's Degree from the University of Michigan.

Aunt Mary was a devoted teacher, always encouraging her students to fulfill their best potentials. She did the same with family, too. Ever the supportive big sister, she sent my father money every week as he worked to get his own degree from her alma mater, Alma College. My father often talked of his deep gratitude for her vital support of him during those lean depression. After marrying my uncle, Halley Hughes, Mary took a leave from her career and devoted herself full time to family and raising her three sons: Bob, Dick, and Jim.

Later in life, Aunt Mary returned to her beloved career and for another 21 years. And as a passionate educator, Aunt Mary joined both the National Education Association and Delta Kappa Gamma to enhance the status and fight for the rights of her fellow teachers across Michigan and the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, though she is my beloved aunt, by any objective measure Mary Louise Peters-Hughes has lived an exceptional life, marked by academic excellence, an admirable professional career and a most compassionate and strong family life. Her story and path is truly one we can all look to as an example for our own lives. I, my wife and children and Mary's three children, six grandchildren and nine great grandchildren are grateful for the 100 years she has lived and the lessons and love she has shared with each of us. We wish for many more lived in health and happiness.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2112, CONSOLIDATED AND FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 17, 2011

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Fiscal Year 2012 Conference report for the Agriculture, Commerce-Justice-Science, and Transportation-HUD appropriations bill.

However, I regret the process that brought this bill to the floor. A full one third of this bill, the Transportation-HUD appropriations, has never been considered by the House before. This bill was not written in an open process and members were not allowed to offer amendments to improve the bill.

I am pleased that this bill included the funding I fought for to help our local residents recover and rebuild from the flooding which caused so much destruction in New Jersey. This bill provides \$2.3 billion in needed disaster assistance to ensure Central New Jersey's businesses and home owners have the resources they need to mitigate the damage and put in place preventive measures in advance of future disasters.

Further, this bill rejects the dangerous attempt by House Republicans to end the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and provides the program with almost \$200 million to help local police departments keep our communities safe despite the local budget constraints. While this represents a steep cut in funding from last year, these funds will help some local departments who are having to make tough decisions about firing police officers for a lack of resources. Going forward, we must do far more to get more cops back on the beat.

In these difficult times, this bill also denies an attempt to reduce funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Women, Infants and Children (WIC). SNAP and WIC help our fellow Americans during their most difficult times with some food assistance to help make ends meet. As millions of our fellow Americans are struggling in this difficult economy, this bill provides \$105 billion for domestic food assistance programs, an 18 percent increase from last year, to make sure they are at least able to keep some food on the table.

As a research scientist, I have long supported the important role of federal investment in basic research. I am glad this bill increases funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF) to \$7 billion, an increase of \$173 million. It also provides the necessary funding to continue the development of the James Webb Space Telescope that will allow researchers to find the first galaxies and help create jobs now. Further, this bill provides the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office a 29 percent increase in funding to ensure that our Nation's inventors are able to get their ideas to market and help grow our economy.

I am also pleased that this bill makes needed changes to ensure that the maximum loan limits for the Federal Housing Administration are maintained at a level necessary for areas with high cost housing like we have in New Jersey. With the housing market still weak, this will help provide some necessary stability and support for prospective home owners.

It is unfortunate that this bill freezes funding for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission which is tasked with implementing many of the commonsense Wall Street reforms we approved last year. Without additional funding the CFTC will struggle to prevent future financial crises, and not have the resources needed to fight oil speculation which is increasing the cost of gas at the pump.

Finally, I regret that this bill contains a number of funding restrictions that will limit our Nation's law enforcement officers from combating gun trafficking and prevent sensible regulations from being established to prevent guns from falling into the hands of criminals. Yet again the NRA has been given an early Christmas present with the inclusion of these special giveaways tucked into this bill without a vote or any debate on them.

This is not a perfect bill but it prevents a looming government shutdown. Further, it provides funding increases for a number of critical programs and rejects many of the dangerous cuts contained in the funding bills that the House previously approved. I support passage of this bill despite its pessimistic view of what America can achieve through ambitious funding of the programs covered under the bill.